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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 SY-05 SCCT-01

PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-03 H-02 PRS-01 CIAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6703

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 5272

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4

TAGS: SHUM, PINS, CASC, AR

SUBJECT: AMERICAN BUSINESSMAN'S HOME RAIDED BY APPARENT PARA-MILITARY OR POLICE GROUP

1. SUMMARY. AMCIT BUSINESSMAN RESIDING IN BUENOS AIRES HAS REPORTED TO US THAT HIS HOME WAS INVADED BY ARMED GROUP DURING EARLY MORNING HOURS AUGUST 6. EVIDENCE INDICATES GROUP WERE MILITARY OR POLICE FORCES. INTRUDERS APPARENTLY INVESTIGATING POSSIBLE LEFTIST CONNECTIONS OF STUDENT MEMBER OF FAMILY. AFTER PHYSICALLY INTIMIDATING MEMBERS OF FAMILY AND TAKING MONEY AND VALUABLES, GROUP LEFT APPARENTLY SATISFIED THAT SUBVERSIVE CONNECTIONS UNLIKELY. AMCIT HAS ASKED HIS EMPLOYERS FOR TRANSFER OUT OF ARGENTINA. HE HAS NOT RPT NOT ASKED US TO INTERVENE WITH GOA OR PROTEST, HAS NOT REPORTED INCIDENT TO POLICE, AND REQUESTS PRIOR DISCUSSION WITH HIM OF ANY CONTEMPLATED INTERVENTION ON HIS BEHALF. IF THIS PERMISSION CAN BE OBTAINED, WE PLAN TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS TO GOA ON THIS INCIDENT FOLLOWING HIS DEPARTURE.
END SUMMARY.

2. AMCIT WILLIAM SAENZ, NATURALIZED CITIZEN OF COLOMBIAN EXTRACTION WHO HAS RESIDED IN BUENOS AIRES FOR SEVEN YEARS AS AN EMPLOYEE OF AMERICAN COMPANY CPC INTERNATIONAL (CORN
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PRODUCTS), CAME TO EMBASSY AUGUST 10 TO REPORT INCIDENT TO

POLOFF. HE STATED THAT AT ABOUT 0200 HOURS AUGUST 6 A GROUP OF ABOUT TEN ARMED MEN APPEARED AT HIS HOME IN ACASSUSO SUBURB (WHERE MANY EMBASSY FAMILIES RESIDE). GROUP FORCED ENTRY AND MANHANDLED SAENZ, HIS WIFE AND HIS TWENTY-TWO YEAR-OLD SISTER-IN-LAW. MRS. SAENZ AND HER SISTER ARE COLOMBIAN NATIONALS. TWO YOUNG AMCIT CHILDREN WERE AWAKENED AND OBSERVED INCIDENT. ARMED INTRUDERS REFUSED TO DISPLAY IDENTIFICATION, BUT LEADER SAID "WE ARE ARMY" ("SOMOS DEL EJERCITO"). SAENZ RECOGNIZED SUBMACHINE GUNS AS TYPE USED BY ARGENTINE MILITARY AND POLICE, .45 CALIBER MILITARY AUTOMATIC PISTONS, AND SHOTGUNS. INTRUDERS WERE DRESSED IN MISCELLANEOUS CIVILIAN CLOTHING, AND WERE DESCRIBED BY SAENZ AS "GRUBBY AND LONG-HAIRED." THEY WERE VERY ROUGH, SHOVING AND PUSHING FAMILY MEMBERS, BREAKING OPEN LOCKED DOOR, ETC.

3. APPARENT PURPOSE OF VISIT WAS TO INTERROGATE SISTER-IN-LAW WHO HAS BEEN STUDENT AT LOCAL WOMEN'S LIBRARIAN SCHOOL FOR LAST FOUR YEARS. DURING RECENT ABSENCE ON VACATION OF REST OF SAENZ FAMILY, SISTER-IN-LAW INVITED FEMALE ARGENTINE STUDENT FRIEND FROM SCHOOL TO STAY IN HOUSE WITH HER. KNOWLEDGE OF AND RELATIONSHIP WITH THIS FRIEND WAS MAIN INTEREST OF INTRUDERS. GROUP EXAMINED SAENZ'S US PASSPORT AND UNDERSTOOD EARLY IN INCIDENT THAT HE WAS AMCIT BUSINESSMAN OF LARGE US FIRM. HE WAS ASKED REPEATEDLY IF HE WAS JEW OR COMMUNIST. GROUP EXAMINED ALL HIS PAPERS, CHECKED BOOK TITLES, ETC. INDIVIDUALS IN GROUP POCKETED MONEY, WATCHES, CALCULATOR, SOME JEWELRY, AND HELPED THEMSELVES TO FOOD AND DRINK. LEADER FINALLY TOLD SAENZ THAT THERE SEEMED TO BE "NO PROBLEM" AND INTRUDERS DEPARTED AT ABOUT 0330 IN WHAT SAENZ DESCRIBED AS "LARGE AMERICAN-STYLE CARS." THEY MADE NO THREATS ABOUT LEAVING ARGENTINA OR ABOUT FUTURE CONDUCT OF SISTER-IN-LAW.

4. SAENZ NOTED THAT AT NO TIME DID GROUP APPEAR TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT ATTRACTING NOTICE FROM NEIGHBORS OR POLICE. THEY WERE NOISY AND RELAXED IN BEHAVIOR, AND STAYED OVER ONE AND ONE-HALF HOURS UNTIL FULLY SATISFIED WITH INFORMATION OBTAINED. AREA IS ONE IN WHICH POLICE AND US EMBASSY SECURITY PATROLS ARE PROMINENT, BUT INTRUDERS GAVE NO INDICATION OF CONCERN.
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5. SAENZ DISCUSSED INCIDENT WITH SECURITY ADVISOR OF HIS COMPANY MORNING OF AUGUST 6. IT WAS AGREED THAT INTRUDERS WERE VERY PROBABLY FROM SECURITY FORCES AND THAT REPORT OR PROTEST MIGHT BRING RETALIATION ON SAENZ, ALTHOUGH GROUP HAD NOT SPECIFICALLY WARNED SAENZ NOT TO REPORT INCIDENT. NO REPORT HAS THEREFORE BEEN MADE TO POLICE. MRS. SAENZ REPORTED INCIDENT TO COLOMBIAN ENBASSY, WHICH ACCORDING TO

SAENZ IS CONSIDERING PROTEST TO GOA. SAENZ CALLED THIS EMBASSY AUGUST 9 TO ASK FOR APPOINTMENT WITH A POLITICAL OFFICER, BUT DID NOT INDICATE SUBJECT OR URGENCY. APPOINTMENT WAS MADE FOR MORNING AUGUST 10.

6. SAENZ IS FEARFUL OF RETALIATION FROM POLICE OR WHATEVER ELEMENTS OF SECURITY FORCES WERE INVOLVED. HE HAS MOVED OUT OF HIS HOUSE INTO DOWNTOWN APARTMENT, AND HAS ASKED HIS COMPANY TO TRANSFER HIM FROM ARGENTINA. HIS SISTER-IN-LAW HAS STOPPED ATTENDING SCHOOL, HAS HAD NO CONTACT WITH FRIEND WHO APPARENTLY WAS CAUSE OF INCIDENT, AND PLANS TO LEAVE ARGENTINA IN NEAR FUTURE. SAENZ ASKED THAT WE NOT RPT NOT INTERVENE OR PROTEST WITHOUT FIRST DISCUSSING CONTEMPLATED ACTION WITH HIM. HE IS PREPARED, IF WE WISH, TO MAKE FORMAL SWORN STATEMENT. HE TOLD US THAT COLOMBIAN EMBASSY HAD SUGGESTED TO MRS. SAENZ THAT US EMBASSY MIGHT WISH TO COMMUNICATE WITH IT REGARDING "COORDINATION" OF WHATEVER ACTION MIGHT BE DECIDED UPON.

7. THIS IS NOT FIRST SUCH INCIDENT INVOLVING AMCITS, BUT IT IS TO OUR KNOWLEDGE FIRST INVOLVING RESIDENT BUSINESSMAN OF WELL-KNOWN US FIRM.

8. WE PROPOSE TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS TO FONOFF FOLLOWING SAENZ'S DEPARTURE, PROVIDED HIS CONSENT IS OBTAINED, BASING AN AIDE MEMOIRE ON SAENZ'S STATEMENT. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE WORDS "FORMAL PROTEST" SHOULD BE USED, SINCE THEY COULD TEND TO LINK THIS CASE WITH THAT OF FATHER WEEKS, WHO HAS BEEN OPENLY AND FORMALLY DETAINED BY GOA UNDER LEGAL GROUNDS BASED IN STATE OF SIEGE. WE ALSO PREFER TO PROCEED WITHOUT CONSULTING COLOMBIAN EMBASSY. A COORDINATED APPROACH PROBABLY HAS MORE PITFALLS THAN ADVANTAGES. BASED ON OUR LIMITED KNOWLEDGE OF THE MANNER IN WHICH GOA MILITARY OR POLICE

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ACTIVITIES OF THIS SORT ARE CARRIED OUT, OUR BEST CHANCES OF HAVING SOME IMPACT ON FUTURE POLICE BEHAVIOR WILL BE A MEMORANDUM TO THE FONOFF EXPRESSING OUR DEEP CONCERN THAT INDIVIDUALS REPRESENTING THEMSELVES AS ARGENTINE MILITARY PERSONNEL WOULD BEHAVE IN MANNER CITED, RISKING INJURY TO AN AMERICAN CITIZEN, HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN. WE CAN ONLY LAMENT FACT THAT SENIOR OFFICIAL OF AMERICAN FIRM FELT IT NECESSARY TO FLEE COUNTRY TO AVOID POSSIBILITY OF BEING FURTHER INVOLVED.

9. WHETHER REPRESENTATION IS IN FORM OF PROTEST OR EXPRESSION OF CONCERN REFLECTING ON BEHAVIOR OF PRESUMED MEMBERS ARGENTINE ARMY, GOA IS CERTAIN TO RESPOND THAT INVESTIGATION DETERMINED NO GOA FORCES WERE INVOLVED IN INCIDENT. WE THINK REPRESENTATION WILL SPARK INVESTIGATION BY ARMY

AND PROVINCIAL POLICE WHICH COULD HAVE BENEFICIAL EFFECT ON
THEIR FUTURE BEHAVIOR.
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